Sentence Patterning Chart/ La tabla de formación de oraciones

CCSS: SL.6, L.1, L.2, L.3, L.5, L.6
Preschool Foundations Language: 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Summary

The Sentence Patterning Chart (SPC, a.k.a., Farmer-in-the-Dell), a strategy that comes from Marlene and Robert McCracken, provides a model of a good descriptive sentence. Through the strategy, students utilize the high level, academic vocabulary they have acquired orally to read and/or write sentences with an emphasis on grammar and parts of speech.

Implementation

Implementing the Sentence Patterning Chart (SPC) necessitates that students have been exposed to the language, concepts and vocabulary of the unit. Through strategies designed to promote academic language such as Draw & Labels, Content-Based Chants, the Narrative Input, Dialogic Read Alouds, Vocabulary in Context, and many others, students have a wide range of complex, precise vocabulary that is necessary for this strategy to be successful. For that reason, the SPC is not a strategy that can be done at the beginning of a unit; it is best to wait until the class is 2-3 weeks into a thematic unit before beginning.

Kindergarten - 3rd Grade Procedures

To begin, the teacher uses the SPC graphic organizer with the columns and heading lines already drawn. However, there are no words written. Begin with the noun by writing the heading "noun" and explaining that a noun is a person, place or thing and adding some sketches to represent those ideas. Then provide a plural noun that relates to the content of the thematic unit. Teachers should take care to choose nouns wisely, ensuring that there are plenty of verbs and adjectives related to that noun.

"Students, today we are going to practice creating sentences using all the high-level vocabulary we've been learning. Let's begin with our noun." [Write "noun" at top of column.] "A noun is a person, place or thing." [Sketch in header.] "Today our noun is ."

Next, move to the adjective column, and in the same fashion, write "adjectives" and explain that they are describing words. Ask students to think about the noun, and through a Think-Pair-Share, have the students generate as many adjectives as they can that describe the noun. Be sure to encourage students to utilize the resources around the room, and it is especially helpful to have Content Based Chants that feature adjectives nearby. Students can then share adjectives and the teacher records them on the chart. Whenever possible, the teacher should sketch next to the words being written to assist with decoding and (If instruction is in English) to provide English Learner support.

Once adjectives have been generated, repeat the same process with verbs and then prepositional phrases. Be sure to provide an opportunity for a Think-Pair-Share prior to recording student ideas so that all students are engaged in the process and many vocabulary words can be generated.

In 2nd and 3rd grade, a column for adverbs should be included between the verb and prepositional phrases column. Generating adverbs can be challenging, therefore, it is a good idea to skip the adverb column after you've completed the verb column, and move to the prepositional phrases. Once both verbs and prepositional phrases have been listed, the students can then use the two columns to create a "Cloze"* frame which helps to elicit the adverbs. For example, suppose the chart below had been generated by a group of students learning about insects. When brainstorming adverbs, the teacher could prompt:

> *"Adverbs tell how something happens. How did the insect fly in the garden? How did the insect hover at the pond?" Students can then respond with "quickly, silently", etc.*

adjectives	noun	verbs	adverbs	Prepositional phrases
fast small tiny beautiful amazing harmful spotted	insects	fly molt eat pollinate hover land walk		in the garden in our classroom around the flowers at the pond during the evening

It is important to consistently color-code the parts of speech the same color throughout the year, as well as from grade level to grade level. For example, nouns should always be blue, adjectives should be orange, etc.

Once the class has listed all the parts of speech they are able, then sentences can be chanted to the tune of The Farmer-in-the-Dell. Begin by chanting several times simply using the parts of speech. If there is not an adverb column, the pattern is:

> *"Adjective, adjective, noun.*
> *Adjective, adjective, noun.*
> *Adjective, adjective, adjective, noun, verb, prepositional phrase."*

With adverbs, the pattern is:

> *"Adjective, adjective, noun.*
> *Adjective, adjective, noun.*
> *Adjective, adjective, noun, verb, adverb, prepositional phrase."*

After the students have learned the pattern, small post-its can then be used as arrows or markers to select the words for the sentence, first with the teacher modeling, and then handing it over to students.

The SPC is a strategy laden with endless opportunities to extend the learning. Teachers can demonstrate a variety of sentence patterns, modifying to add detail and creating more complex

sentences. By cutting off the prepositional phrase column and moving it to the front, students can learn how to vary their sentences by beginning with this part of speech. Teachers can also work on antonyms or synonyms by creating separate sheets and utilizing the adjective column as a vocabulary prompt. Similarly, verb tense can be taught in this same manner. The possibilities are truly endless… comparative & superlative adjectives, irregular vs. regular past tense verbs, subject & predicate, direct objects, etc. Because of the depth of this strategy, only one SPC should be generated and used per unit.

Note: For Spanish Instructed classrooms, the "sustantivo" (noun) column will come first to follow the proper grammar. It is then sung, using only two adjectives following this pattern:

"Los/Las sustantivo, adjetivo y adjetivo,
Sustantivo, adjetivo y adjetivo,
Sustantivo, adjetivo y adjetivo, verbo, frase preposicional."

Preschool/Transitional Kindergarten Procedures
Because there is not an emphasis of putting eyes on print at the earliest grades, the SPC is done with small groups of children, orally using pictures in Pre-K and TK. The teacher creates a chart/mat with the columns already labeled—adjective, noun, verb, prepositional phrase. With the guidance of the teacher, students can take turns building sentences. First, the student selects a picture to represent the noun. Then, they can choose other pictures to represent the adjective, verb, and prepositional phrase. While the student is placing pictures, the teacher and the other students are being guided to use the vocabulary the image represents. Once the four pictures have been chosen, the students practice singing the sentence. As an additional step, teachers can record the sentence on a piece of paper for the children to illustrate. For students who are ready to begin to attend to print, Pre-K and TK teachers should pull them in small homogeneous groups and create the SPC using words and pictures as a scaffold to the K-3 protocol described above.

** Cloze: A portion of text with certain words removed, where the participant is asked to replace the missing words. Cloze tests require the ability to understand context and vocabulary in order to identify the correct words or type of words that belong in the deleted passages of a text.*

Notes on Strategy

Leveraging the SPC in D-ELD

Part I: Interacting in Meaningful Ways

B. Interpretive

8. Analyzing language choices

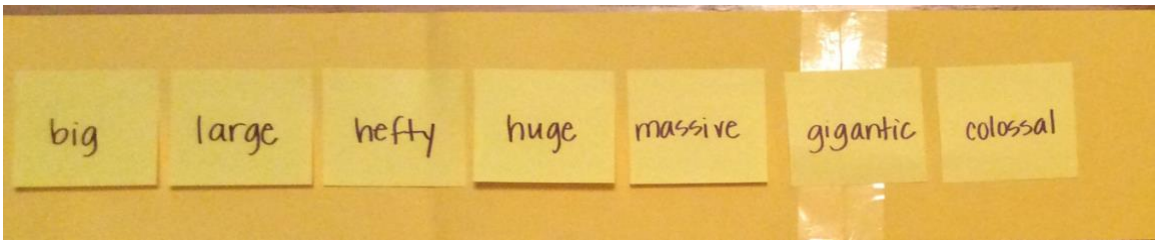
*connect adjectives/adverbs/verbs to semantic gradients and "shades of meaning"

C. Productive

12. Selecting language resources

*using the SPC to promote more specific vocabulary during writing

*connect adjectives/adverbs/verbs to semantic gradients and "shades of meaning"



Part II: Learning About How English Works

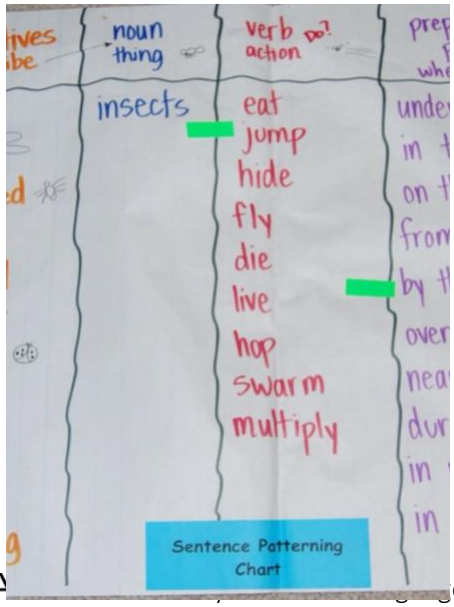
B. Expanding and Enriching Ideas

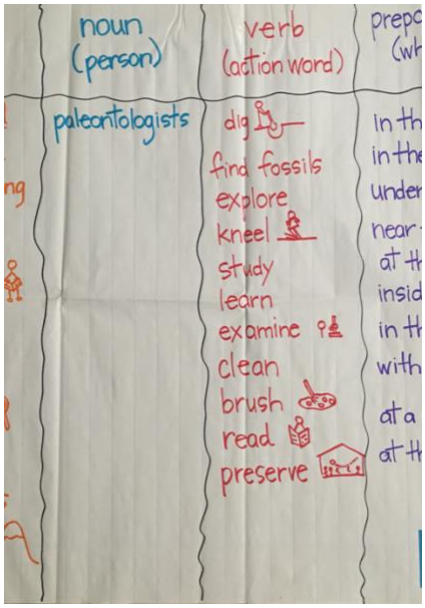
3. Using verbs and verb phrases

*expand on verb types (action, being/having, saying, thinking/feeling)

*change verb tenses

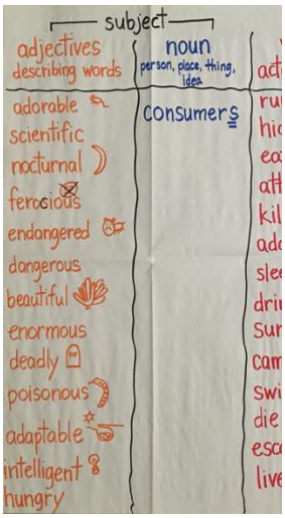
*modal auxiliaries (should, could, etc.)

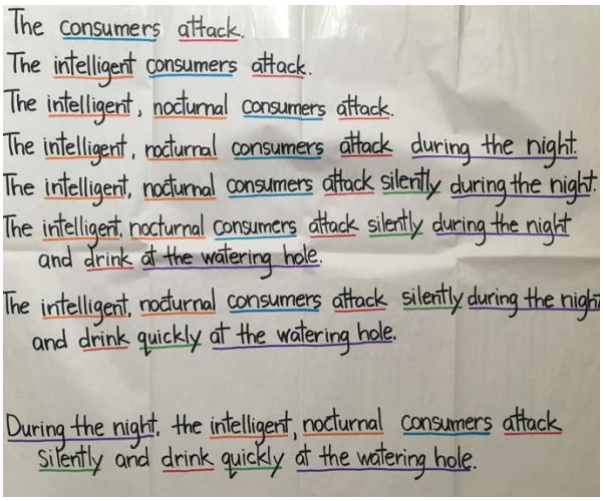




4. Using nouns and noun phrases

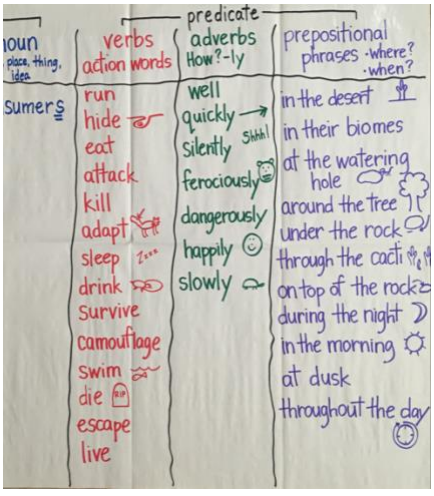
*expanding noun phrases with additional modifiers, including combining multiple adjectives
*adding "articles" column
*synonyms &/or antonyms

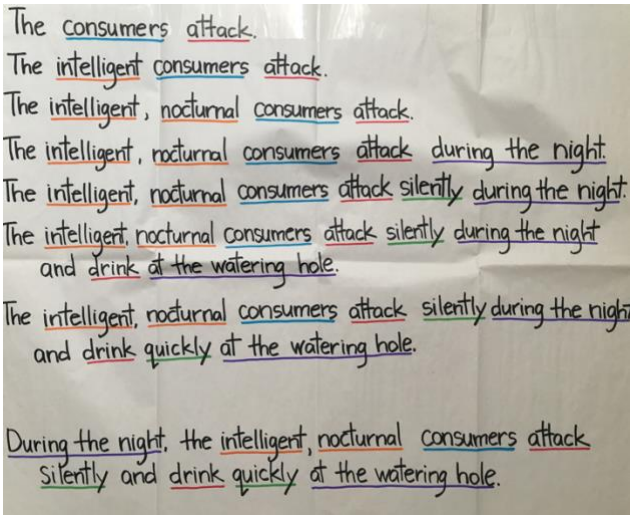




5. Modifying to add details

*moving prepositional phrases from end to front of sentence
*expanding on prepositional phrases (where, when) and utilizing more than one prepositional phrase
*using more than one adverb in a sentence





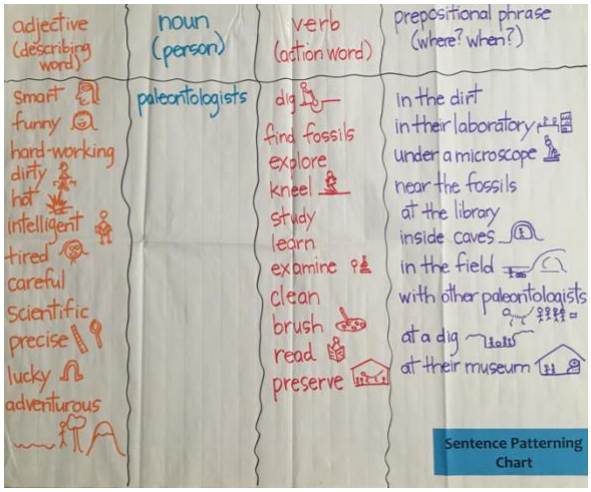
C. Connecting and Condensing Ideas

6. Connecting Ideas

*use SPC sentences to work with combining clauses

7. Condensing Ideas

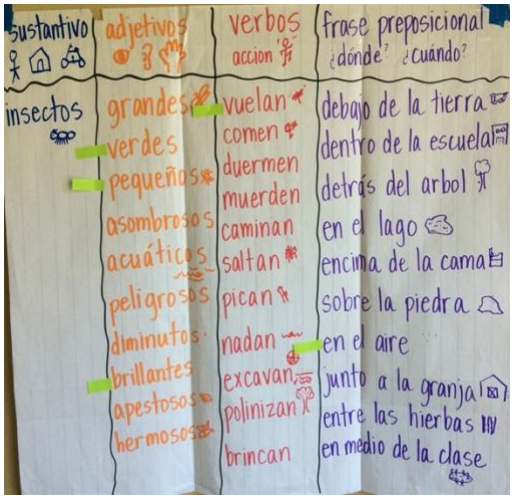
*use SPC sentences to work with condensing clauses

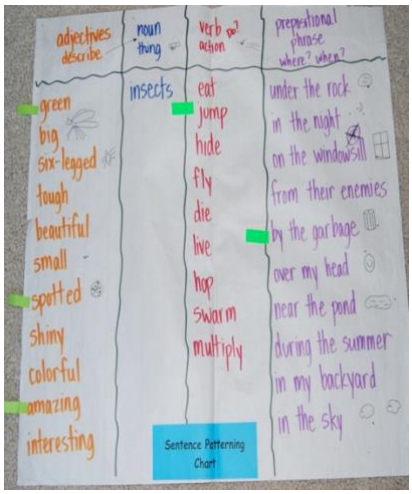


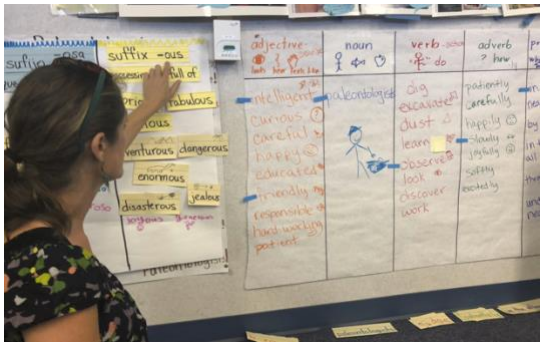
*using conjunctions!

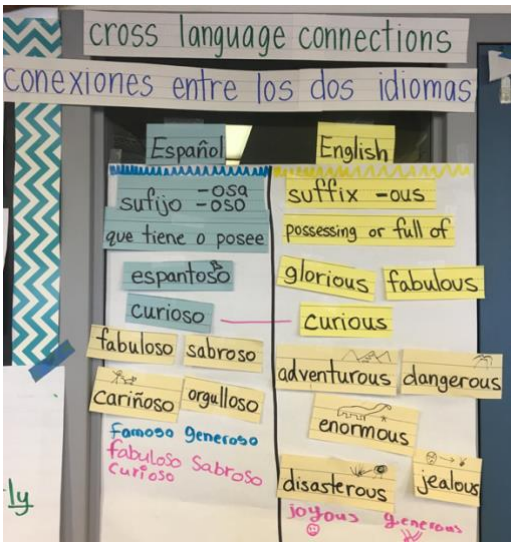
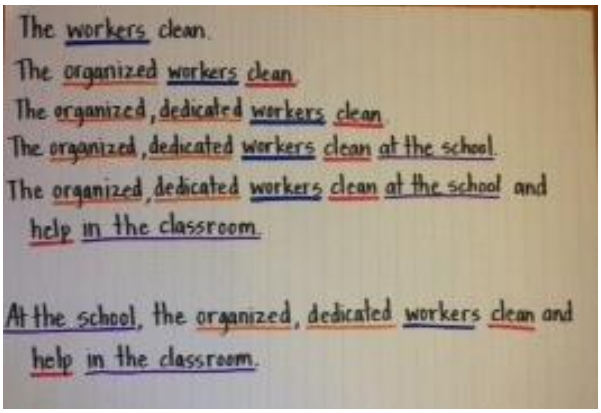
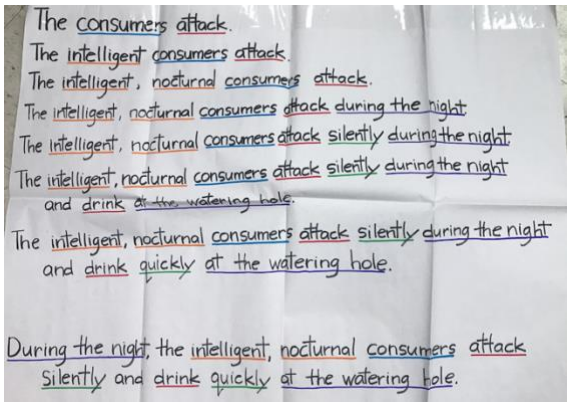
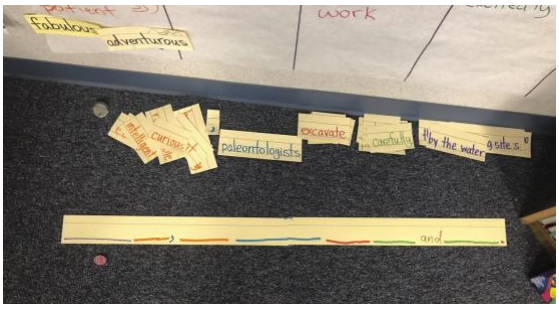
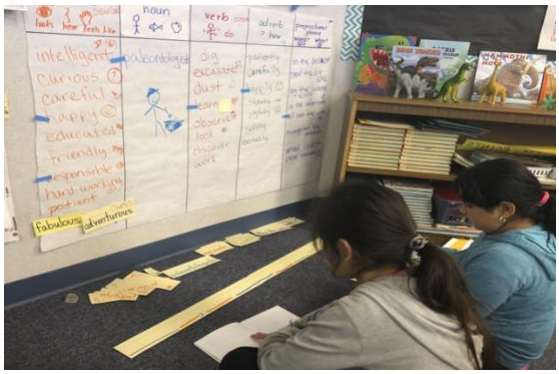
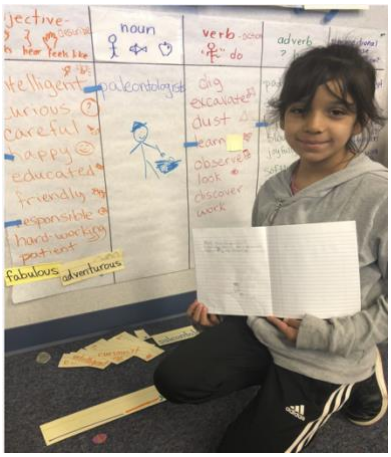
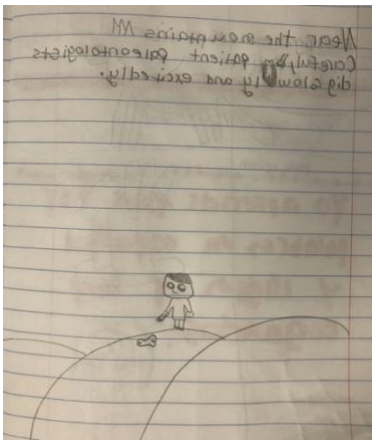
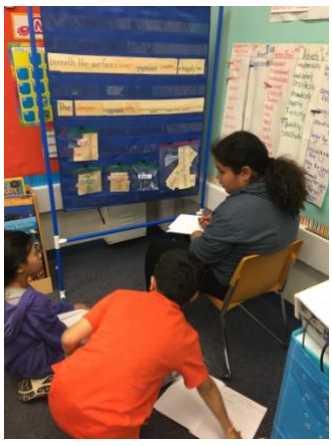
Opportunities in Dual Language Classrooms

*look for cognates
*adjective/noun placement
*transfer opportunities









As a scaffold toward independent writing…